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The Week of August 14, 2026

$250,000 in Youth Outdoor Grants Now Available







Photos Courtesy of Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation

By Sydney Trainor

On August 3, Governor Joe Lombardo and the Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation (NDOR) announced the second round of grant funding through the Youth Outdoor Growth and innovation (YOGI) Grant Program. The grant provides $250,000 to "expand outdoor education and recreation" opportunities for kids in Nevada.

This is the second half of the $500,000 biennial allocation, which was approved by the Nevada legislature to provide more outdoor education opportunities for children across the state.

This Funding cycle is the first time the YOGI grant name has been used, as the funds were previously offered as the Nevada Outdoor Education and Recreation (NOER) Grant. While the program continues to support youth outdoor education and recreation, it now also includes funding for youth outdoor infrastructure projects. The NOER Grant Programs now oversee grant programs including the YOGI Grant, the Community Outdoor Recreation and Revitalization (CORR) Grant, and the Cosmos Across Nevada (CAN) Grant.

"Nevada is home to some of the finest outdoor recreation opportunities in the country, and we want every young Nevadan to have a chance to experience them," said Governor Joe Lombardo. "This funding will help communities across the state expand programs that give more children the opportunity to experience the outdoors through education, recreation, and hands-on learning experiences."

The YOGI program launched in 2024, and since then grant funding has supported 64 projects in Nevada, including archery clinics, backpacking camps, ski and snowboard lessons, and educational field trips to national parks and monuments. These projects provided opportunities for nearly 28,000 youth to spend over 290,000 hours outside.

"Whether it's a child's first hike, a weekend at camp, or learning a new outdoor skill, those moments often become memories that last a lifetime," said NDOR Administrator Denise Beronio. "Through the YOGI Grant, we're helping local organizations create more opportunities for Nevada youth to explore, learn, and experience the outdoors close to home."

Community groups such as schools, tribal governments, and nonprofits are encouraged to apply for YOGI funding. Applications are due Oct. 5, 2026. All final applications must be reviewed by NDOR or the Advisory Board on Outdoor Recreation Technical Advisory Committee, before funds are awarded. Additionally, NDOR offers a feedback period in August where applicants can request a preliminary review of their application materials to strengthen their submissions. Awards will be announced in December 2026.

To learn more and apply online, visit https://ndor.nv.gov/yogi-grants.

For more information on YOGI Grants, contact NOERgrant@ndor.nv.gov.

Regional Water Authority Expands Ability to Challenge Water Applications

CENTRAL NEVADA REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY
Protecting Our Water Resources

By Doris Rodriguez

During its July 24 meeting, the Central Nevada Water Authority (CNRWA) amended a policy, reviewed geothermal development, water rights applications, and proposed changes to Nevada's water law. The authority represents 10 rural counties and monitors water policy, legislation, and water-right activity affecting central and northeastern Nevada.

One of the most significant actions came as the board reconsidered a 20-year-old policy governing when the organization may protest water-right applications before the Nevada State Engineer. Executive Director Jeff Fontaine said the policy, adopted in 2006 when the authority had only six member counties, no longer adequately addresses situations where groundwater pumping or an inter-basin transfer occurs in one county but creates impacts in another.

The issue has become increasingly important as counties contend with mining, energy and data center projects whose water demands can cross jurisdictional and hydrologic boundaries. Fontaine pointed to recent concerns raised by the Walker River Paiute Tribe about potential water use associated with a data center project in Mason Valley, and possible effects on Walker River flows.

Under the previous policy, the authority could face difficulty protesting an application when the point of diversion and place of use were outside the county experiencing the potential effects. The proposed change allows Fontaine to file a protest when deadlines do not allow enough time for the board to fully meet, only after he consults with the authority's chair, vice chair, and a representative of an affected county. The protest would then return to the authority at its next meeting for ratification and could be withdrawn if the board or affected county no longer wanted to pursue it.

Board members emphasized that filing a protest preserves the organization's ability to participate while a water-right application is being reviewed. The amendment also removes language that limited potential impacts to the county containing the proposed point of diversion or place of use. The board unanimously voted to amend the policy.

The discussion arose partially from frustration over the amount of time counties sometimes have to identify and respond to water-right applications. Nye County Commissioner Debra Strickland told the board that county officials recently received information concerning an inter-basin water transfer with only days to respond internally.

"I've never seen this happen before, where it moved from basin to basin, and our connectivity is creating that," Strickland said.

During public comment, Dan Saffner of the Desert Research Institute updated the board on county water resource plans being developed for eight rural and frontier counties. Six are members of the regional authority, including Esmeralda, Elko, Lander, Mineral, Pershing and White Pine counties.

DRI is identifying potential future development projects, such as mines, energy projects, and data centers, and estimating their potential water demands.

Continue Readning on Page 3.

Back to School Safety Tips from the Red Cross

By Sydney Trainor

With more than 100,000 students across Northern Nevada heading back to school in the coming weeks, the American Red Cross of Northern Nevada is encouraging families to review basic safety practices before the school year begins.

According to the American Red Cross, one of the first areas parents and caregivers should address is how children will safely travel to and from school. Before classes begin, families are encouraged to go over the safest route to school, identify appropriate places to cross streets, discuss the importance of staying alert, and make sure children know what to do if an unexpected situation occurs.

"For parents, the days before school starts are a good time to talk with children about staying safe on the way to and from school," said Bridget Posson, Executive Director of the American Red Cross Northern Nevada Chapter. "Those conversations can help children feel more confident, recognize potential hazards and make good decisions whether they're walking, biking, riding the bus or driving."

For younger children, the American Red Cross recommends walking the route to school before the first day, so they know where to safely cross streets and wait for the bus. Children who bike to school should wear a properly fitted helmet every time they ride.

Additionally, the Red Cross recommends that older students should be reminded to pay attention to their surroundings while walking or biking. Those listening to music should leave one earbud out so they can hear traffic, buses, and other activity around them.

Continue Reading on Page 2



Publisher/President
Rachel Dahl

Rach@RangeMediaCo.com

Editor
Sydney Trainor

Sydney@FallonMediaLLC.com

Layout & Design
Jesse Bell

info@thehumboldtsun.com

Ads & Announcements
Ashley Buckingham
and
Joe Plummer

Sales@WinnemuccaPublishing.net

Sports Department
Tony Erquiaga
and
Robert Perea

Tony@winnemuccapublishing.net
Robert@fernleyreporter.com

Contributors
John Baker
Doris Bridges
Winston Brooks
Nancy Chapman
Jen Anderson
Shellie Harrell

Mail
Great Basin Sun
437 Bridge Street
Winnemucca, NV 89446

The Great Basin Sun is published weekly on Fridays by
Fallon Media LLC
437 Bridge Street
Winnemucca, NV 89446
775-623-5011

Address Changes
Send address changes to:

Great Basin Sun
437 Bridge Street
Winnemucca, NV 89446
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ACROSS RURAL NEVADA

Investor Crackdowns Would be Fool's Gold for Nevada's Housing Market

By Liz Arnold

Mining isn't just another industry in Nevada, it's a way of life and a core piece of the state's economy.

It contributes roughly 6% of our state's GDP and supports over 40,000 Nevadans who work directly and indirectly in the sector. Behind every one of those jobs is a family, a mortgage, a kid in a local school, a regular table at a diner in Winnemucca or Fallon. The mining industry is the economic backbone for rural Nevada, and it bolsters our state's economy.

However, despite the economic weight of the mining sector, the workers who drive it often struggle to find a decent place to live near the job site.

When a new mining operation opens or expands, hundreds of workers can arrive in a matter of weeks. Local housing markets in places like Elko, Tonopah, and Ely already face housing shortages and simply don't have the inventory to absorb the sudden influx of workers. As a result, workers are forced to commute brutal distances, and employers struggle to recruit and retain the people they need.

Rural Nevada's housing market was never designed to support large employers on its own, given the state's vast geography and widely dispersed population. That's precisely why investors, both large and small, who finance, build, rehabilitate, and then manage much-needed housing, have become essential to keeping these communities and their economies running. When the local market can't supply what workers need, these housing providers step in to fill the gap, funding new construction, bringing vacant properties back into use, and creating rental options that simply wouldn't exist otherwise.

It's troubling that legislators in Carson City would handicap these solutions.

Recent housing policy proposals, including blanket bans and sweeping restrictions on these housing providers, would kneecap the solutions that are filling this gap. Nevada is one of the most mining-intensive states in the country, with mining employment concentrations roughly ten times the national average. Lawmakers crafting housing policy need to align with that reality, not ignore it.

The single-family rentals that have been under the microscope of lawmakers at the state and federal levels provide workers with flexible, safe, and more spacious housing options in better neighborhoods and school districts, closer to work. Taking those options away to chase a make-believe bogeyman in the housing market isn't a pro-renter policy. It's an anti-worker policy.

A professor from the University of Nevada, Reno, recently wrote that these housing providers play "an important — and often misunderstood — role in helping close the housing supply gap" in Nevada. Where public funding and small-scale development fall short, especially in rural communities, private capital fills the gap by financing new construction and bringing distressed or vacant properties back to life.

If state lawmakers pursue a blunt, one-size-fits-all investor ban, it would sweep up the housing providers building and managing workforce housing in communities like Elko, Ely, and Tonopah. Policies written to address speculation in big metro markets shouldn't be allowed to gut the industries and housing solutions keeping small towns alive.

In rural Nevada, when housing providers build and invest, they aren't cornering the real estate market; they are providing more quality places to live, whether it's for a short-term project or a more permanent stay. That's not a threat to our communities, it's the reason they thrive.

Lawmakers in Carson City should stop treating those who are focused on bringing more housing to our state like the enemy. They should be doing everything in their power to encourage more of it. Making it harder for families to access affordable housing and employment in rural Nevada should not be an unintended consequence of legislation designed to address public perceptions in Las Vegas, particularly when the statewide impact risks doing more harm than good.

Liz Arnold is a mining and resources industries advocate and consultant, providing community outreach services to mining companies. She is a member of the Women's Mining Coalition and received the 2021 Prazen Living Legend of Mining Award from the National Mining Hall of Fame & Museum.

Continued from Page 1- Back To School

As students return to school, the Red Cross is also reminding drivers to prepare for increased activity around school zones. This means slowing down in school zones, watching for children in crosswalks, and staying alert around bus stops.

Nevada drivers will see another change this school year. Under a state law that took effect July 1, penalties for traffic violations committed in active school zones are doubled.

The Red Cross recommends several safety practices for students. These include standing at least 10 feet or five big steps away from the curb while waiting for the school bus and only crossing streets at intersections or marked crosswalks. Additionally, stay where the bus driver can see you and never walk behind the bus, wear a properly fitted helmet while riding bikes, and keep one earbud out while listening to music in order to stay aware of surroundings.

Drivers are encouraged to slow down and stay alert in school zones and neighborhoods where children may be walking or biking. Other safety tips for drivers include never passing a school bus when its red lights are flashing and its stop arm is extended, putting phones and other distractions away while driving, and making room for extra travel time during the first weeks of school, where traffic will be heavier.

The Red Cross also encourages families to prepare for emergencies by becoming familiar with their child's school emergency procedures and making sure that the school has current emergency contact information, including the names of anyone authorized to pick up their child if needed.

Families are also encouraged to create a household emergency plan outlining who to contact, where to meet, and how family members will communicate if an emergency occurs during the school day.

Military Family Lifestyle Survey

Staff Report

The North Nevada Outpost for Blue Star Families is supporting their 2026 Military Family Lifestyle Survey.

This survey offers a unique opportunity for active-duty service members, National Guard, reserve, veterans and their families to share what military life is really like.

Blue Star Families reads every word you share. We invite you to describe your experiences until Aug. 9. Your participation is crucial to inspiring change for the military and Veteran community. Will you take a few minutes to share what matters most to you?

KKOH's Veterans Voice

Staff Report

Veterans Voice, which is broadcast twice a month on Reno's KKOH Radio (780 a.m.), is on Thursdays, August 13 and 27, beginning at 4:05 p.m.

The Nevada News Group's Steve Ranson and KKOH host Ryan Nutter discuss upcoming veteran events. Every broadcast tries to have a representative from a veterans' organization or event. If interested, email SNMGmilitaryeditor@gmail.com.

Art Garden's Next Phase

Staff Report

If you can please help the amazing volunteer team at Martin-Harris Construction raise funds for the next phase of the Northern Nevada State Veterans Home's Veterans Art Garden – a space created for residents, their loved ones, guests and staff to enjoy for generations – we can get this project to the finish line. You can help bring the next phase of this vision to life by

sponsoring, donating, and/or attending a special fundraising dinner on Friday, Aug. 28 at the Reno Elks Lodge.

This is not just a garden. It's a sanctuary. A retreat from life's hustle. A rendezvous for residents and their families. A whimsical space where veterans rekindle bonds through art and nature. To move this effort forward, we are seeking event sponsors for the sinner, donated raffle Items and individual ticket purchases

Visit the website to view current sponsors and additional information: www.veteransartgarden.org/bbq

To join this effort, contact fundraiser chair Catherine Monday at catherine.monday@martinharris.com or 775 306-1700.

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EVENTS

Virginia City's 67th Annual International Camel & Ostrich Races are on the Horizon

Staff Report

Camels, ostriches, zebras and emus will once again race through Virginia City as the 67th annual International Camel & Ostrich Races return September 11-13.

What began more than six decades ago has become one of Northern Nevada's most unusual and beloved traditions, drawing visitors to the historic Comstock town for a weekend of racing, entertainment and old-fashioned Virginia City fun.

The three day event at the Virginia City Fairgrounds will feature four race shows, with professional and amateur jockeys attempting to stay aboard their unconventional racing partners as they gallop, swerve and occasionally falter their way around the track.

Beyond the races, visitors can make a weekend of the event with food trucks, arts and craft vendors and beverages throughout the fairgrounds. The races also offer an opportunity to explore Virginia City itself, from its historic saloons and museums to restaurants, shops, mine tours and other attractions.

"It's remarkable to see an event that began more than six decades ago continue to bring new generations to Virginia City," said Todd Tuttle, tourism director for Virginia City. "Every year we welcome people who have been coming for decades alongside visitors experiencing the races for the very first time."

The event has become one of Virginia City's signature attractions, bringing together the town's historic character with a spectacle that is difficult to find anywhere else.

For more information on the 67th International Camel & Ostrich Races, visit their website at visitvirginiacitynv.com, call Virginia City Tourism Commission at 775-847-7500 or follow them on social media.



Camel Jockey competing in the annual camel races. Photo Courtesy Virginia City

The weekend features four race shows, each with its own mix of humor and unpredictability as riders attempt to steer their animals across the finish line.

The schedule of events include:

Friday, Sept. 11 at 5 p.m. Hot Camel Nights (Locals Discount)

Saturday, Sept. 12 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Two shows

Saturday, Sept. 12 at 12:30 p.m. Camel Hump on C Street

Sunday, Sept. 13 at 12 p.m. Family Day with free camel rides for first 100 kids

High Sierra Chili Championship brings the heat to Minden

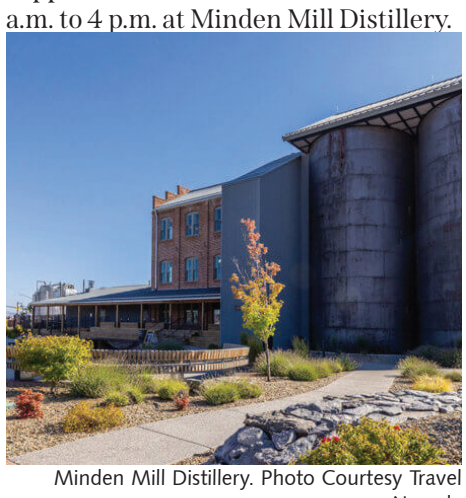
Staff Report

Chili lovers can get a taste of the competition at the annual High Sierra Chili Championship on Saturday, Aug. 15, at Minden Mill Distillery.

Presented by the Tahoe Douglas Elks and sanctioned by the International Chili Society, the family-friendly event will feature regional chili and salsa competitions, spirit tastings, live music and public tastings.

The competition is an official qualifier for the International Chili Society World Chili Championship, with categories including traditional red, homestyle, chili verde and open salsa.

Admission is free, with unlimited chili tasting available for $15 while supplies last. The event runs from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Minden Mill Distillery.



Minden Mill Distillery. Photo Courtesy Travel Nevada

Cosmos in the Desert Festival Set for August 14-15



Photo Courtesy: Adobe

By Jesse Bell

Far from the glow of city lights on a clear summer night, the Nevada sky comes alive. Thousands of stars emerge overhead as the Milky Way stretches across the desert sky, revealing a side of Nevada that many people don't typically stop to admire.

That breathtaking view is the inspiration behind the second annual Cosmos in the Desert: Northern Nevada's Dark Skies Festival, taking place Aug. 14-15 at Lahontan State Recreation Area near Silver Springs.

Hosted by the Nevada Division of State Parks, the Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation and Friends of Nevada Wilderness, the festival celebrates one of Nevada's greatest natural resources: its remarkably dark skies.

Evening activities will be held from 8 to 11 p.m. both nights at the Beach 3 Day Use Area on the Silver Springs side of the park. Visitors can explore the night sky through telescope-assisted stargazing, constellation presentations, wildlife programs, storytelling, interactive art experiences, local artists and vendors, and educational exhibits from Travel Nevada.

The festival also offers daytime activities on Saturday, beginning with a Dutch oven cooking demonstration by the Northern Sierra Dutch Oven Group at 11 a.m. From 4 to 6 p.m., visitors can enjoy astronomy-themed arts and crafts, trivia and other family-friendly activities at the Silver Springs Senior Center, before returning to the park for another evening beneath the stars.

Admission to Cosmos in the Desert is free, although regular park entrance fees apply. Standard camping fees also apply for those planning to stay overnight.

A complete schedule of events is available at parks.nv.gov/events.

Continued from Page 1- CNRWA

Saffner encouraged continued coordination among counties, DRI, and the regional authority as those developments are identified.

Fontaine also updated the board on water legislation being developed ahead of the 2027 Nevada Legislature. Proposals under discussion include changes involving voluntary water-right retirement, agricultural property taxes, groundwater management boards, monitoring and mitigation plans associated with major water applications, and greater transparency surrounding basin assessments imposed by the State Engineer.

The proposed legislation is still moving through the interim legislative process and could change substantially before the 2027 session.

The board separately directed Fontaine to begin identifying a small government affairs firm or individual lobbyist to assist the authority during the legislative session. The authority previously relied on longtime Nevada lobbyist Nina Laxalt, who passed away earlier this year. Fontaine said he intends to remain directly involved with major water legislation but needs assistance monitoring bills, coordinating meetings and managing the day-to-day legislative process.

Board members also reviewed pending water-right applications across the authority's member counties. Particular attention was given to several applications submitted by Pilot Metals involving the proposed transfer of water from the Lone Valley groundwater basin for use in another basin as part of a tungsten mining project.

Fontaine said the applications involve a combined proposed duty of approximately 1,200 acre-feet and would move water both between groundwater basins and across county lines. Because the transfer exceeds 250 acre-feet, state law requires an inventory of the basin from which the water would be removed.

Additionally, The Bureau of Land Management has filed a protest raising concerns including potential effects on springs, federal reserved water rights, and groundwater movement to neighboring basins. Although the deadline to file a formal protest has passed, Fontaine said counties still have opportunities to participate in the inter-basin transfer review and comment on the required basin inventory.

The board also received an update on litigation involving a proposed inter-basin water transfer project in southern Utah that could affect water resources in Nevada. The authority previously joined other entities seeking an administrative stay of a Bureau of Land Management right-of-way decision. That request was denied, and the parties are considering taking the matter to federal district court.

The authority could be asked to join that litigation and potentially contribute toward legal expenses. Fontaine said any such request would return to the board for consideration.

The Central Nevada Regional Water Authority is scheduled to meet again on Nov. 6 in Fallon.



SPORTS

Mountain West announces 2027 softball schedule

Tony Erquiaga

The University of Nevada softball team found out what its new-look Mountain West schedule will look like, as the conference the 2027 schedule, setting the stage for a spring campaign featuring a competitive blend of home series at Christina M. Hixson Softball Park and challenging road trips across the West.

Nevada's seven-series conference slate features Mountain West holdovers in New Mexico, UNLV, San José State and Grand Canyon. UTEP, Hawai'i and UC Davis, join the Mountain West as new members.

Boise State, Fresno State, Utah State and Colorado State have now joined the Pac 12.

Nevada opens the 2027 campaign on the road March 25–27, traveling to Albuquerque for a three-game series against the New Mexico Lobos. The Wolf Pack returns home the following weekend, hosting UTEP April 2-4 in its conference home opener.

A second straight home series follows as Nevada welcomes UC Davis to Reno from April 9-11. The Wolf Pack then heads west to Honolulu to face Hawai'i from April 16-18.

Nevada returns home April 23-25 for a Silver State Series showdown with UNLV before continuing its homestand April 30-May 2 against Grand Canyon.

The Wolf Pack closes the regular season May 7-9 with a road series at San José State.

Nevada's home non-conference matches and all Mountain West matches will be streamed exclusively on MW+, the new Mountain West subscription streaming platform.

Wolf Pack fans can visit https://watch.themw.com/nevada and enter code WELCOME15 for 15 percent off the annual subscription price.

2027 Nevada Softball Mountain West Schedule

March 25–27: at New Mexico
April 2–4: vs. UTEP
April 9–11: vs. UC Davis
April 16–18: at Hawai'i
April 23–25: vs. UNLV
April 30–May 2: vs. Grand Canyon
May 7–9: at San José State



Nevada Double Header Brings Ream Ropers to Winnemucca

Staff Report

The Humboldt County Fairgrounds welcomed team ropers from across the West Aug. 1-2 as the Nevada Double Header returned to Winnemucca for a weekend of Ariat World Series of Team Roping and National Team Roping competition.

The two-day event drew competitors to the fairgrounds to compete in multiple handicap divisions and high-payout ropings while bringing visitors to the community during the busy summer event season.

Saturday featured Ariat World Series of Team Roping competition with divisions ranging from 14.5 to 7.5, along with a 10.5 Bloomer roping. Sunday's schedule shifted to National Team Roping events, including the 10.5 and 9.5 Megabucks, the 9.5 Legend High Roller, the 8.5 Showdown and the 7.5 Two-Steer Championships.

Several of the weekend's featured events offered trophy saddles, championship buckles and cash prizes for top finishers.

Competitors were required to meet handicap qualifications for their respective divisions, with qualifying teams advancing to short-round competition. Events were conducted under Ariat World Series of Team Roping and National Team Roping guidelines.

The Nevada Double Header was presented as part of the Ariat World Series of Team Roping and sponsored in part by the Winnemucca Convention and Visitors Authority. Yost Events produced the competition.


Megabucks winner - Huntley Jo Byrd and Jason Boegle.


Courtesy Photo- Saddle Winners - Nora Hunt Lee and Clayton Hiibel

UNLV's Boyd An Outland Trophy Watch List Member



Tony Erquiaga

With the new college football season quickly approaching, the UNLV football team continues to rack up preseason awards.

UNLV center Austin Boyd is a member of the 2026 Outland Trophy Preseason Watch List, released by the Football Writers Association of America.

Named after former Penn great John Outland, the Outland Trophy has been awarded to college football's top interior offensive or defensive lineman since 1946. There are 21 offensive tackles on this year's list to lead the individual positions to go with 18 guards, 16 defensive tackles and 13 centers. Only interior linemen on offense or defense are eligible for the award; ends and edge rushers are not eligible.

Boyd, from Lehi, Utah), who was recently named Preseason All-Mountain West, is a versatile standout lineman who has started games at both guard and tackle for the Rebels during his career before moving into the middle as the squad's starting center as a senior 2026.

The semifinalists for the Outland Trophy will be announced on Nov. 18, followed by a joint announcement with ESPN of the three finalists on Nov. 24. The 81st recipient of the Outland Trophy will be announced on The Home Depot College Football Awards, live on ESPN in December.

The official presentation to the winner will be made at the Outland Trophy Awards Dinner sponsored by Werner Enterprises and produced by the Greater Omaha Sports Committee in Omaha, Nebraska, on Jan. 27, 2027.

The Outland Trophy, celebrating its 81st year since its founding, is the third-oldest major college football award. Created in 1946 when Dr. John Outland presented the FWAA with a financial contribution to initiate the award.

Under the direction of second-year head coach Dan Mullen, the Rebels will kick off their 59th season of football Aug. 29, by hosting Memphis in a highly-anticipated Week Zero national matchup on FOX.

